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## ENG 3010G-004: Literary Masterworks

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**ENG 3010: Literary Masterworks**  
**Prof. Guzlowski, Fall 2002**

**Office:** 3781 Coleman Hall  
 Email: jzguzlowski@eiu.edu  
 Phone 581-6973  
 Hours: T 9-930, 1230-2, W 9-12 noon, Th 9-930, and by appointment

**Special Needs:** Students with special needs who require academic accommodations should contact Disabilities Services at 581-6583.

**Course Objectives:** The purpose of this course is to give students a chance to take a look at a number of literary masterworks, and to ask and start to answer a number of questions about these works. One of the central questions we'll be discussing is: What makes a literary masterwork a literary masterwork? Is it the tone? The size? The theme?

Also, since all of the works we'll be looking at are American ones, we'll be asking a related question: What makes an American literary masterwork? What are the things that these American works have in common? And what do they tell us about American culture, American life, American art, and the American self? What are Americans really like? How do we see ourselves? How do we see others? How do we view the world around us? How do we view the books that are written about us? Somebody said that Americans are unique because they are always asking "What is an American?" The French don't wonder about what it means to be French, and the Italians don't wonder what it means to be Italian? But Americans are always wondering what America is and What they are? And who they were? And what they will be tomorrow and the day after?

**Course Requirements:** Reading of Assigned Texts  
 Responses 100 points  
 Final Paper 100 points  
 Mid Term 100 points  
 Final Exam 100 points  
 Quizzes 60 points

**Grades:** 414-460 points = A                      368-413 points = B  
 322-367 points = C                      276-321 points = D  
 0-275 points = F

**Reading:** This course requires much reading, and some of the works are difficult. I've tried to space the big readings out so that we aren't doing one big thing after another. But, pretty much, you have to keep reading.

**Paper:** You'll write one paper, at least 2000 words long. This paper must be argumentative (proving some significant point). The papers will be graded on both form and content. Highest grades will go to papers which are most insightfully, thoughtfully, energetically and gracefully written. The paper is due during the last class. Late papers will be accepted without penalty if there is a valid excuse (death, illness, and some act of God). If the excuse is unacceptable, the paper grade will be dropped a letter grade for each calendar day it is late. More information regarding every aspect of this assignment later in the semester.

**Exams:** They will be comprehensive and will contain objective and subjective components. You will be asked to 1) identify characters, situations, images from the literature, 2) identify and explain quotations from the works we will be reading, 3) explain in short essay answers important issues as they relate to the literature, and 4) answer longer essay questions about them

**Quizzes:** There will be 12 quizzes during the semester. The questions will sometimes be objective, sometimes subjective. Each quiz will be worth 5 points. If you miss a quiz, you will be able to make it up if you have a valid, serious excuse for the absence.

**Responses:** We learn about literature not only by reading and talking about it but also by writing about it. During the semester, each student will write 10 responses to the works we'll be reading. No student can write more than one response per week. The responses may be hand-written or typed. They should be at least 200 words long. Each response should either analyze an important issue in the work you are responding to or answer some important question or questions that you feel the work raises. Summaries of the work or summaries of class discussion of the work will not be accepted.

The individual responses must be turned in on the day that we start discussing the work the response responds to. The reason for this is that I want your fresh response [no matter how hesitant] uncluttered by the possible interference from the classroom discussion. Responses may be revised within 10 days of being turned in. Late responses will not be accepted.

**Plagiarism:** Note the English Dept.'s statement: "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (Random House Dict.)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course."

### **Syllabus:**

Aug. 28: Letters from An American Farmer: Letter III. What is An American. NAL, I, 640-650.

Sept. 4: Emerson, Nature, Chapters I-IV (NAL, I, 1073-1085), Chs VII-VIII (NAL, I, 1095-1101); "The American Scholar," (NAL, I, 1101-1114); "Self-Reliance," (NAL, I, 1126-1143).

Sept. 11: Thoreau, Walden, Chs.1, 2, 5, 11, 17, 18 (NAL, I)

Sept. 18: Whitman, Song of Myself, (NAL, I, 2198-2241)

Sept. 25: Dickinson, selected poems (NAL).

Oct. 2: Twain, Huck Finn, NAL, II, 28-217

Oct. 9: Cather, Oh Pioneer

Oct.16: **Mid-Term exam**

Oct.23: Frost, selected poems (NAL) and Eliot, selected poems (NAL)

Oct. 30: Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby

Nov. 6: Faulkner, Light in August

Nov. 13: Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath

Nov. 20: Ginsberg, Howl, (NAL I, 2634-2641) and Sylvia Plath, selected poems (NAL)

Dec. 4: O'Brien, The Things They Carried

Dec. 11: Morrison, Beloved

### **Final Exam**